

THE SHEKEL

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Edward Schuman. Editor

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President's Message

By Mel Wacks

I am very happy to say that our stalwart editor Ed Schuman's health has improved and he will not be leaving us after all. I look forward to many more excellent issues of The Shekel under his stewardship. And while Florence Schuman has turned over her duties as Treasurer to Simcha Kuritzky, I am happy to indicate that she will continue as a member of our Board of Directors.

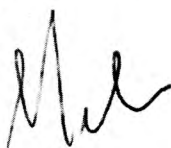
To paraphrase Mark Twain, "The report of the death of the Israel Coin Club/Numismatic Society of Los Angeles was an exaggeration." Local AINA members joined with club regulars at a November meeting at my home where we heard talks about Israel's new issues in 2006 and Moe Berg, the baseball player who was also an American spy. It was decided to change the meeting date to the morning of the third Sunday of the month, and to alternate between Los Angeles (near Beverly Hills) and the San Fernando Valley (Sherman Oaks). Anyone wishing further information can contact club president Sagi Salomon at (310) 795-6101 or cnfdrt@aol.com.

The design of our new AINA token will be based on a Kabbalistic amulet granting "Financial Security" to the owner. You can read all about it in the next issue of The Shekel, and every member will receive a token along with the next issue of The Shekel.

You have received a dues statement for 2007. Our treasurer, Simcha Kuritzky asks that you send in your dues promptly so he can avoid the time and expense of sending follow up letters as reminders.

At the last board meeting, we voted to update and expand the AINA web site www.amerisrael.com. We are looking for someone with the ability to do this. If you or anyone you know can help, please contact me at ainapresident@lycos.com.

Happy collecting,



The Editor's Page

By Edward Schuman

My health had deteriorated so badly that I thought I could not finish last month's issue. My kidney function was so low that I could hardly walk around our condo. I was put on a Baxter Dialysis Cycler machine and after being on it for a few weeks now it is second nature to me. I connect up at night and the machine does its job while I sleep. So I have returned to edit the SHEKEL though in reality I never left.

Please note that there are new faces in some positions in AINA. Florence can no longer be treasurer as her priority now is taking care of me. The changes are listed on page 2 of this issue and there is contact information as well. The Biscayne postal office is closed but mail addressed to it should be forwarded to Silver Spring, Md.

We have lost another long time member of AINA. Mort Ronick of Virginia Beach, Va. has passed away. Mort was a co-founder of an Israel Numismatic Society club and an active member and supporter of Israel. He and his wife Ci's were on several AINA tours. He was a close friend of Yitzak Avni who headed the IGCMC for many years. His late son was the subject of a profile by Donna Sims a few months back. Mort personally signed up ten new members in his memory. Mort's wife passed away a few weeks ago, and sadly Mort could not live without her. His daughter wrote that he died of a broken heart.

This issue is pretty diversified and contained articles about Ancient Judaica, Judaic medals, Early Palestine Fiscal documents and modern issues. There should be items of interest to every one. I wish to thank Marvin Tameanko and Shmuel Aviezer for their continued support of the magazine and the assistance they provide. And also our president Mel Wacks has provided several articles as well. Please keep them coming.

Till the next issue



An Early 19th Century Moral Medal

It may be questionable if the medal illustrated below falls into the Judaica category. The obverse is a direct reference to one of the Ten Commandments - "Honor your father and your mother, so that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you," - It pictures Moses, with horns seated on a throne, directly pointing to the tablets of the Covenant. The legend, in German exhorting children to "honor thy mother and father on which (reverse) their well being may depend".

This is a fine example of the long and fine German tradition of gift medals struck for special events (birth, baptism, marriage), to celebrate love and friendship, or as in this case, as a gift with moralistic devices and legends, generally intended for children.

For the more prosperous they were made of silver or gold and were often struck to standard coinage modules. For the less well off they were made of billon, or tin/zinc alloys. This example is of high grade silver.

The Loos family for three generations were among the most prolific and best known German medalists. Daniel Friedrich Loos (1735-1819) was born in Altenburg, worked at the Munzstätten Leipzig and Magdeburg from 1756 to 1767, then was appointed to the position of Chief Engraver (Hauptmünzgraveur) to the Court at Berlin in 1768. In addition to his artistic contributions he had a deep interest in the minting methods and technology to which he contributed many improvements. The younger son, Gottfried Bernhard Loos (1774-1843) formed the Loos' Mint or Münzprägestalt in Berlin which was well known throughout the 19th century for both the artistic and technical quality of its products. His son, Friedrich William (1811-1893), continued in the family tradition.



VESPASIAN'S TRIUMPH FOR HIS DEFEAT OF THE JEWS IN AD 70, ILLUSTRATED ON ANCIENT COINS

By Marvin Tameanko

The most popular antiquity in Rome for Jewish tourists is the Arch of Titus located in the ancient Roman Forum. Jews visit this site principally to view the sculptural panels carved on the walls inside the monument. These reliefs commemorate the Roman victory over Judaea and the destruction of Jerusalem during the First Revolt of the Jews in AD 66-70, and the modern-day tourists' visits can be recognized as poetic acts of defiance. The Roman nation no longer exists in any form while Israel and the Jews survived this ancient calamity and flourish. Customarily, orthodox Jews will not pass through this arch out of respect for the Jewish captives who were forced to do this as an act of submission to Rome. And during my last visit to the Arch of Titus several years ago I noticed that someone had proudly chalked the Hebrew motto, "Am Yisroel Chai," "The People of Israel Live," on the base of the arch.



**The Arch of Titus in the Roman Forum restored to its
appearance in AD 70**

The sculptural pictures inside this arch depict the triumphal parade celebrated in AD 71 by Vespasian and his son, Titus, who was the actual conqueror of Jerusalem. The arch was built as an official, imperial monument because a 'triumph' was the highest military award that could be granted to a victorious Roman emperor or general (imperator). Traditionally, a triumph consisted of a long, formal procession of soldiers, captives, booty, and the emperor or the 'triumphator' riding in a special

victory chariot. The parade assembled on the Campus Martius, the Field of War, in Rome, marched through the streets into the public buildings and theaters along the way, then through the Circus Maximus and the Roman Forum, and ended on the Capitoline Hill in front of the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, the national religious shrine, where the emperor deposited his golden victory wreath of laurel leaves. The two panels inside the arch of Titus, facing each other, provide a panoramic view of Vespasian and Titus's triumph in great detail. At the beginning of the scene, actually the end of the parade, a triumphator, probably Vespasian, is seen in a quadriga (a four-horse chariot), with a servant dressed as the deity, winged Victory, behind him and holding a wreath over his head. Several officers as well as soldiers precede the chariot. On the second panel, soldiers carry the spoils of the war, particularly the loot taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. Signs or standards identifying the golden menorah, the silver trumpets and the table of the shew-bread are held aloft by marching soldiers. At the front of the parade the soldiers are seen approaching a victory arch, possibly the Arch of Titus itself.



The two panels of sculpture inside the Arch of Titus, rearranged and aligned to illustrate the entire triumphal parade as one continuous procession.

Remarkably, this triumphal parade is illustrated on many coins struck by Vespasian during the years AD 71-81. These coins are usually grouped together with the famous, so-called 'Judaea Capta' coins, which commemorated the defeat of the Jews, but they are artistically and historically distinct and so belong in a separate category that could be called the 'Triumphal Coins'. The premier and most significant coin in this series is a very rare aureus of Vespasian, struck in AD 71 in the mint of Lugdunum (Lyon), Gaul. This splendid coin encapsulates the entire procession, from the beginning to the very end with the emperor in his victory quadriga, accompanied by the slave dressed as Victory. On the coin the emperor is preceded by soldiers and a bound captive. A soldier in the background blows a horn, perhaps one of the silver trumpets taken from the Temple in Jerusalem. This panoramic view captures the very essence of

the parade and even includes a caption for the illustration by expressing the abbreviated inscription **TRIUMP AVG**, meaning 'The Triumph of the Emperor'. As the coin was struck in AD 71, it is clearly a celebration of Vespasian's triumph over Judaea.



A very rare aureus of Vespasian, struck in Lugdunum in AD 71, showing the triumphal parade. This is the rarest and most desirable coin issued by Vespasian. The Roman Imperial Coinage, hereafter cited as RIC, Vol. II, Vespasian, 294.

The captive Jew at the front of the procession on this coin may be either Simon bar Gioras or John of Giscala, the leaders of the Jews who defended Jerusalem. Fortunately for historians and numismatists, Joseph ben Matthias, called Flavius Josephus by the Romans, the Jewish turncoat historian who deserted during the war and joined the entourage of Vespasian, fully described this triumph in his book, the War of The Jews, Book VII, chapter 5. Josephus said that after the march, the captive Jewish general, Simon bar Gioras, was led away from the triumph and executed. This was a traditional practice following a Roman triumph. (Book VII, chapter 5, 6). Bearing this report in mind, this coin may be the only contemporary depiction of a Jewish leader of the 1st century AD. Another possible representation of Simon bar Gioras may appear on a denarius struck for Titus showing a bound Jewish captive at the foot of a military trophy of arms. The inscription on this coin, **TR POT VIII COS VII**, indicates the coin was struck in AD 79, a date close enough to the time of the triumph that we can classify it as a Triumphal Coin commemorating the parade.



A denarius of Titus, struck in AD 79, showing a bound captive at the foot of a military trophy of arms. RIC, Titus 1. The same coin was also struck as an aureus, RIC, Titus 1 and 5.

Josephus also mentioned that there were several 'floats' or carts in the triumphal pageant that carried models of the cities conquered, piles of booty, and groups of captives or trophies of the war. (Book VII, Chapter 5, 5). Also, some of these floats consisted of soldiers and captives who dramatized and acted out key events of the battles such as the storming of Jerusalem's walls or the capture of the Jewish leaders. A rare coin of Vespasian, struck in AD 72, may illustrate one of these dramas performed on a float. This coin shows Vespasian holding out a statue of a winged Victory while two captive Jews, a male and female, implore the emperor for mercy. We know this scene is a reference to the Jewish War because behind the captives is a palm tree, the usual symbol for Judaea. On this coin the emperor places his foot on the prow of a ship, which probably alluded to the Roman naval victories on the Sea of Galilee or in the Mediterranean, off the coast at Jaffa, as recorded by Josephus in Book III, Chapter 9.



A rare sestertius struck for Vespasian in AD 72, showing two Jews pleading with the emperor. This may be an actual dramatic scene acted out on one of the floats in the emperors triumphal parade. RIC 525.

The climax of the triumphal parade was the victor in a quadriga, dressed in the ceremonial robes of Jupiter and holding an eagle-tipped scepter. Behind him stood a slave, dressed as a winged Victory and holding a wreath of golden laurel leaves over the emperor's head. It was customary for this slave to whisper a warning in the ear of the victor reminding him that he was only a mortal. Following the quadriga came the soldiers singing bawdy songs about the emperor while the spectators lining the streets shouted out the traditional salute, "Io Triumphe," meaning "Hurrah the Triumph." Even though the sculptural panels inside the arch of Titus show only Vespasian in the quadriga, historians note that it was a dual triumph for the emperor and his son Titus and, indeed, coins were struck for both the Flavians depicting them in their own triumphal chariots. These coins, issued in silver and bronze, show the father and son in quadrigas of different designs, and holding scepters and laurel branches to indicate they are participating in a triumph.



A sestertius of Vespasian, struck in AD 71, showing the emperor Vespasian in a triumphal chariot. RIC 451. This coin was so popular the same design was struck in AD 72, RIC 524 and in AD 73, RIC 536.



A sestertius of Titus as Caesar under Vespasian, struck in AD 72, showing him in a triumphal chariot in a composition similar to the coin of his father. RIC 629.

The triumph celebrated by the Flavians in Rome was repeated by triumphs held in several middle-eastern cities such as Caesarea and Antioch. Josephus, in his War of the Jews, Book VI, Chapter 9, 3, tells us that more than one million Jews died in the war and 97,000 prisoners were taken.

As part of the triumphal ceremonies, many of these captives were forced to fight to the death as gladiators in Roman arenas all over the empire or to serve as slaves building the Colosseum in Rome. But the triumph held in Rome in AD 71 did not mark the end of the First Jewish War. Some Judaeen patriots, who escaped the slaughter, carried on the struggle against the Romans from the mountain top, desert fortress of Masada until their deaths by suicide in AD 73. By way of this extended combat, and through the perspective of time, the last desperate stand of the Jews at Masada will be remembered as a valiant struggle for freedom long after the triumph of Vespasian and Titus has faded into history.



ANCIENT WATER SYSTEMS IN ERETZ ISRAEL

In ancient times, a source of water and the ability to bring water to the population were essential criteria for determining the location of a settlement. Ancient water systems within fortified cities, including underground quarried tunnels, have been uncovered in many places in Eretz Israel. These systems are evidence of the engineering skill and understanding of hydrology of the early inhabitants as well as their technical ability.

The most prominent among them, mostly from the Iron Age (9th to 7th centuries before the Common Era) are Hazor, Megiddo, Jerusalem and others. As cities grew it became increasingly necessary to bring water from more distant sources. Beginning with the Hellenistic period (3rd C. before the Common Era) aqueducts were built which transported spring water many kilometers



The first medal in the series features the aqueduct in Caesarea. First built during the Herodian period, the aqueduct brought water from springs at the base of Mount Carmel and Ramot Menashe, about nine kilometers northeast of Caesarea. It was designed in a way that ensured that water would flow by the pull of gravity, from the springs to the city, necessitating careful measuring of the gradient.

In some portions the aqueduct was built on a series of arches, in other places the water flowed through a tunnel. After entering the city from the north, the water flowed through pipes to collecting pools and fountains throughout the city.

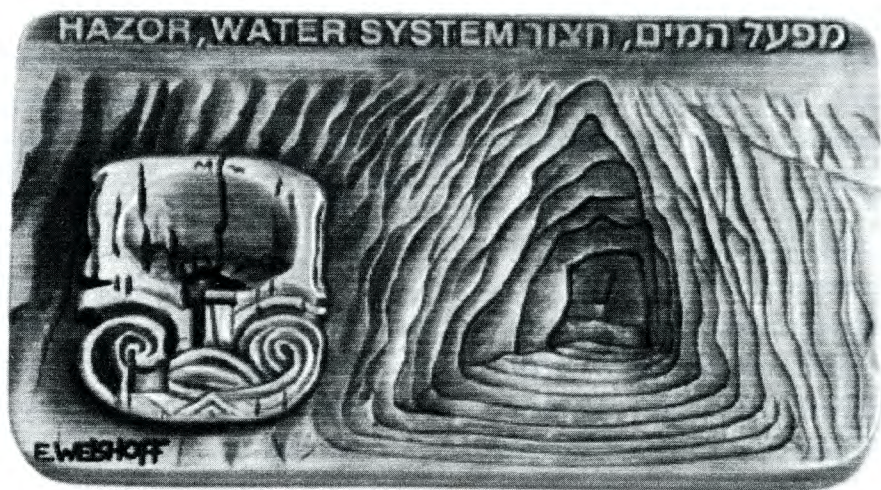
On the medal is a rendering of the arched section of the aqueduct and a picture of a coin minted in Caesarea during the Roman period. The stylized boat relates to the importance of Caesarea as a port city.

The second medal in this series features the unique water system at Hazor. The *tel* (mound) of the ancient city of Hazor is the largest and richest archeological site in Israel. It is located in the upper Galilee, 14 km. north of the Sea of Galilee. The mound rises only slightly above the fertile plain surrounding it and consists of two parts: a lower tel with an area of some 170 acres and the acropolis to the south with an area of about 30 acres.

In the 9th century BCE, during the rule of King Ahab, Israelite Hatzor became a great, royal city, grandly planned. The eastern part of the upper *tel* was surrounded by a solid wall and the early casemate wall in the west was filled in with stone, resulting in a massive, strong and uniform wall surrounding the entire city.

A water system of amazing size and engineering complexity was constructed at Hazor during the reign of King Ahab. It is located in the south of the city, opposite the natural springs in the valley at the base of the mound. The main component of the water system is a broad, rectangular shaft, cut into the rock to a depth of approximately 90 feet. A 9 foot wide winding staircase along the walls, leads to the bottom. The lowest flight of stairs continues in a southwesterly direction into a sloping, 12 foot high and 75 foot. long tunnel, which leads to a water chamber cut into the aquifer. This unique water system ensured the continued water supply to the city even in time of siege, hidden from the enemy's view.

On the medal face, the lower portion of the sloping tunnel. On the back, common to the 4 medals in the series, a verse from the Book of Kings.



Myer Myers, New York Silversmith

Myer Myers of New York City is one of the most deservedly esteemed colonial American silversmiths. Myer Myers was born in New York City in 1723, the son of Solomon and Judith Myers. The family lived one block away from Shearith Israel's synagogue on Mill Street, where Solomon, and later his sons, were active members of the congregation and where many of the most useful documentary records of Myers's life can be found. After the traditional seven-year apprenticeship with a master silversmith, he registered as a "Goldsmith" in 1746, the first native Jew within the British Empire to establish himself as a working retail silversmith since the incorporation of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths in 1327.

While 380 objects marked by him survive, there are few letters and no account books or other documents related to what was surely a large workshop. Myers's Torah finials are unique examples of eighteenth-century American Jewish silver and they are also among the most extraordinary precious-metal objects produced in Colonial America. Myers was the most productive silversmith working in New York during the late Colonial period and his ritual and secular silver is the largest body of extant work by a Jewish silversmith from anywhere in Europe or America prior to the nineteenth century. He became the dominant figure in a large, well-established community of silversmiths that included native craftsmen of Dutch, Huguenot, and English ancestry, as well as immigrants from Europe. His renown as an artisan came from his ability to execute superb custom order work for the wealthiest patrons.

His New York workshop was, in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, one of the few that supplied such labor-intensive, richly ornamented forms as candlesticks, pierced bread baskets, covered jugs, and cruet stands, and alone in the production of such specialized work as Torah finials. Myers' output was not, however, confined to these style-conscious forms. From the mid-1750s his shop generated a steady income by satisfying the demand for more modest forms of hollowware and flatware from a larger, less affluent clientele.

While Myers is not nearly as well known as Paul Revere, who worked in Boston, Myers, like Revere, is counted among a select group of highly respected merchant-artisans of the time. His work is found in major museum collections including the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and Harvard University Art Galleries.

It is not known with whom Myers trained, but it is thought that his requisite seven-year apprenticeship began in 1738, because he was sworn in as a freeman one year after he finished his training, as was customary at the time. His earliest surviving silver is in the Anglo-Dutch style. Shortly thereafter he worked in the baroque idiom as practiced by immigrant Huguenot silversmiths. For this reason, it is highly likely that he apprenticed with Charles Le Roux, who might also have taught him the rudimentary elements of engraving--simple things like block initials used to identify the owner. This was particularly important when silver was stolen. Numerous newspaper advertisements of the period confirm this. Owners cited their initials in order to more easily reclaim it. For more complicated decorative engraving, specialists were engaged.

By the mid-1750s the rococo style had taken root and this coincided in an increase in Myers's commissions. The French and Indian War brought prosperity because New York was the headquarters for the British army. About 1756 Myers was the first silversmith in New York to enter into a partnership. At the time there were no other Jewish silversmiths with whom he could affiliate so he chose Benjamin Halstead--thereby forming a liaison that opened up business prospects outside the Jewish community. Unfortunately only about twenty objects with the partnership's mark survive from this period, a surprisingly low number since we know it was one of Myers's most productive periods and one in which he also used his own mark alone. Myers struck his mark in the most visible place possible (one time as part of an engraved inscription and in another instance two of his marks appear adjacent to the owner's monogram). This was an unheard of practice in both England and America. Myers was also the first New York silversmith to use a surname mark.

Making casting patterns may have been a specialty of Myers's shop, and he might even have sold or loaned them to others, for elements of pieces made by other silversmiths and even pewterers have components that are identical to those that make up pieces made by Myers. Sometime before 1755 Myers must have hired an engraver to execute armorials and monograms, for the same hand may be identified in the engraved embellishments on different pieces. By the second half of the 1760s Myers produced objects with chased decoration, which was never as popular in New York as it was elsewhere. The following decade he was producing the pierced objects for which he is so highly regarded.

The summer of 1776 brought Myers's activities as a silversmith and entrepreneur to an abrupt halt. George Washington had made New York

his headquarters and British troops besieged the city. Myers and Joyce Mears, his second wife — his first having died—and six dependent children moved with other Jewish families to Norwalk, Connecticut, on the mistaken assumption that the enemy, as Samson Mears, Myers's brother-in-law observed, "will have greater objects to attend to than this insignificant place." In July 1779 a British force attacked and burned the town leaving the residents homeless and Myers without his tools. The family settled in Stratford, Connecticut for the remainder of the Revolutionary War years and, despite his losses, it is evident from extant objects that Myers continued to work as a silversmith.

These were difficult years financially, and he never fully recovered from his reduced circumstances even after he moved back to New York in 1783. At this time the neoclassical style held sway, and Myers made pieces decorated with bright cutting, a newly popular way to ornament silver. In the post-war period many silversmiths became retailers, and Myers followed suit. While finding it difficult to rise to his previous leading position within his trade, he continued to hold offices in his congregation until his death in 1795.



The illustrated medal, engraved by
Karen Worth,
is medal #17 of the
Medallic History of the Jews
of America



Myers Teapot, 1746-54

Reading Material – Old and New

About Ancient Judaeon Coins

By Mel Wacks

Collectors and those interested in the coins of ancient Judaea (often called “Coins of the Bible”) are very fortunate that so many reference works are available. Some of the important earlier books are the “History of Jewish Coinage” by Frederic Madden (1864), and “A Handy Guide to Jewish Coins” by Rev. E. Rogers (1914). “Jewish Symbols on Ancient Jewish Coins” by Paul Romanoff (1944) is also a must-read for those interested in this series.

The first important modern reference was A. Reifenberg’s “Ancient Jewish Coins,” first published in 1940. It was Reifenberg who, following G. F. Hill’s (Catalog of Greek Coins in the British Museum: Palestine, 1914) lead, assigned the famous silver Shekels to the First Revolt (66-70 CE). In 1967, the late Ya’akov Meshorer expanded on Reifenberg in his “Jewish Coins of the Second Temple Period.” Among other things, Meshorer reattributed the fractional-shekel bronze coins from Simon Maccabi to the First Revolt. In 1976, my own concise “Handbook of Biblical Numismatics” appeared, that also briefly discussed coins mentioned in the New Testament, and those issued by the Arabs and Crusaders in the Holy Land. An updated version of this book can be read in its entirety at www.amuseum.org/book. Also in 1976, David Hendin published the first edition of his “Guide to Ancient Jewish Coins,” in which he concludes that Judaeon coinage began with Alexander Jannaeus, not John Hyrcanus I.

In recent years, Meshorer and Hendin have updated and expanded their research. And handsomely illustrated books have been published, such as “The Numismatic Legacy of the Jews” by Samuels, Rynearson and Meshorer (2000), and “Money of the Bible” by Kenneth Bressett (2005).

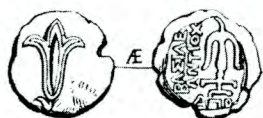
Research has continued into the fascinating field of ancient Judaeon coins, resulting in occasional articles in learned publications such as the “American Journal of Numismatics” and the newly launched “ANA Journal, Advanced Studies in Numismatics;” subscription information can be obtained from the American Numismatic Society and the American Numismatic Association, respectively.

In the American Journal of Numismatics No. 15, dated 2003 and published in 2004, Oliver Hoover has written a comprehensive, well researched paper: “The Seleucid Coinage of John Hyrcanus I: the

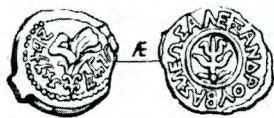
Transformation of a Dynastic Symbol in Hellenistic Judaea,” in which he traces the anchor and lily symbols through the coins issued by the Greek-Syrian Seleucid King Antiochus VII (137-129 BCE) through the Hasmonaeen (Maccabean) Judaeen Kings John Hyrcanus I (135-104 BCE), Alexander Jannaeus (103-76 BCE), and Herod the Great (37-4 BCE).

The opening paragraph concisely summarizes the author’s theses:

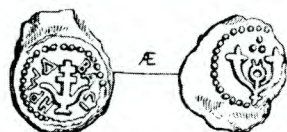
“Although often seen as an imposition on John Hyrcanus I, the bronze coinage with the types of a lily (representing the Hasmonaeans) and anchor (symbolizing the Seleucid kings) struck at Jerusalem in the name of Antiochus VII should be reinterpreted as a sign of the Hasmonaeen state’s relative autonomy. This coinage ended with the death of Antiochus VII in 129 BC, but the anchor and, to a lesser extent, the lily reappeared on the coinage of Hyrcanus’ son, Alexander Jannaeus, to illustrate the continuity of his reign with his father’s. The anchor symbolism continued to be potent in Judaea after the fall of the Hasmonaeans, reappearing on several series of bronze coins struck at Jerusalem under Herod the Great. Even after Herod’s death in 4 BC, the anchor emblem lived on, apparently now as a Herodian symbol. Again, the purpose seems to have been to express continuity and legitimacy.”



Coin of Antiochus VII



Coin of Alexander Jannaeus

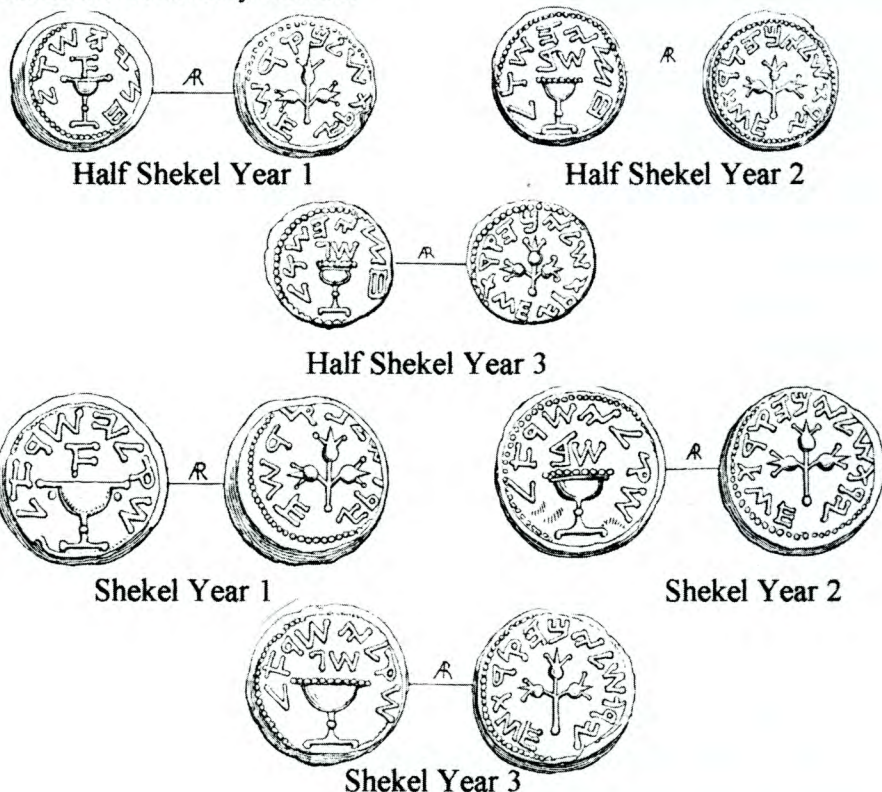


Coin of Herod
the Great

The second issue of the ANA Journal (Spring 2006) features the article “A New Study of the Coins of the First Jewish Revolt against Rome” by Isadore Goldstein and Jean Philippe Fontanille. The report features die studies of the Shekels, Half Shekels and other coins issued during the First Revolt, an analysis of the quantities issued in each year (66-70 CE) of the 5-year output, a discussion of the designs and legends used, and a history of the circumstances under which the first silver coins were issued by a Jewish governmental authority.

One of the more interesting findings by the authors is that while the quantities of Shekels studied varied greatly in years 1, 2 and 3 (81, 258 and 128, respectively), the quantities of Half Shekels were surprisingly consistent (76, 80 and 78). They conclude that: “Since the half shekels

were needed in the Temple (for payment of the annual tax) by the beginning of each year, they were slated for the earliest production. They were struck *before* the shekels, allowing the required quota of half shekels to be minted in years with regular production. (Since) the government and minting authority were under the high priests and chief Pharisees (they) would have seen to it that the needs of the Temple were attended to first and the needs of society second.”



These publications show how much ancient coins can help to throw light on the people and events of 2,000 years ago. Originals and reprints of the books mentioned are often available on amazon.com and ebay.com.

Note: Illustrations by F. W. Fairholt, from “History of Jewish Coinage” by Frederic Madden (1864).

Jewish History in Bialystok

Bialystok is an industrial city in the northeast Poland. It was one of the principal Russian Polish Jewish centers (in Russian: Belostok), incorporated into Russia between 1807 and 1921 and administrated by the U.S.S.R. between 1939 and 1941, reverting to Poland in 1945.

Originally, the Bialystok community formed a part of the Tykocin (Tikin) community. Jewish settlement in the village of Bialystok was encountered by the manorial overlords, and the heads of the Jewish community were permitted to take part in the municipal elections in 1749. The position of the Jews deteriorated when Bialystok passed to Prussia (1795), and subsequently to Russia. The economic situation deteriorated when there was an influx of Jews expelled from the neighboring villages in 1825-35 and 1845. There was a steep increase in the Jewish population, which in 1856 numbered 9547 out of a total population of 13787. Many of them were homeless or unemployed. Welfare institutions were established in an attempt to alleviate the situation.

The development of the large textile industry in Bialystok after the Napoleonic wars owes much to the Jewish enterprise. Textile mills were erected by two Jews in 1850. As they acquired spinning, weaving, knitting and dyeing mills, Jews replaced the German specialists. In 1860, 19 of the 44 textile mills in Bialystok were Jewish-owned. In 1898, of the 372 mills in Bialystok, 299 (83.38%) were Jewish-owned, while 5,192 (59.5%) of the workers were Jewish.

The Jewish labor movement found strong support in Bialystok, and in 1897, many Jewish workers there became members of the Bund. The Bialystok Jewish workers issued an underground newspaper: "*Der Bialystoker Arbayer*". In the same year, the intensive activities of the labor movement in Bialystok during the Russian revolution of 1905-06 provoked savage acts of reprisal by the Russian authorities. The pogroms in Bialystok that occurred between June 1 and 3, 1906, were the most violent of the mob outbreaks against Russian Jewry that year. Resulting in 70 Jews being killed and 90 gravely injured.

The contacts with German Jewry during the period that Bialystok was governed by Prussia had introduced the spirit of enlightenment ("Haskala") into Jewish circles in Bialystok. Prominent in the movement were members of the Zamenhof family, Elazar Ludwig Zamenhof, (created the international language of Esperanto); Abraham Schapiro, author of "*Toldot Yisrael ve-Sifrut* (1892); Jehiel Michael Zublodoski, a contributor to *Ha'Karmel* and author of *Ru'ach Chayyim* (1860); and the

poet Menachem Mendl Dolitzki. A Chovevei Zion group was formed in Bialystok in 1880.

Modern Jewish elementary schools, such as the modern *Cheder* (*Cheder Metukkan*), a girls' school and institutes for commerce and crafts were founded while Bialystok was part of Russia: the language of instruction was Russian, but Hebrew was also taught. The first Hebrew kindergarten was founded in 1910. Hebrew elementary and high schools were established after World War I.

In 1895, the Jewish population numbered 47,783 (out of 62993). Of the 3628 merchants and shopkeepers in the city in 1897, 3186 (87.8%) were Jews. In 1913, the Jewish population numbered 61,500 (out of 89,700). In 1921, 93% of the businessmen were Jewish, and 89% of the industrial plants were Jewish-owned; later the proportion of Jews in business decreased (to 78.3% in 1928). In 1932 there were over 46,000 (out of 91,207) in Bialystok.

Shortly after the outbreak of World War II, the Germans entered Bialystok. First occupying it from September 15 until September 22 1939, when it was transferred to the Soviets. The second German occupation was from June 27, 1941, to July 27, 1944. At that time, some 50,000 Jews lived in Bialystok and about 350000 in the whole province. On the day following the second German occupation, known as "Red Friday", the Germans burned down the Jewish quarter, including the synagogue and at least 2000 Jews who had been driven inside. Other similar events followed in rapid succession: on Thursday, July 3, 300 of the Jewish intelligentsia were rounded up and taken to Pietrasze, a field outside the town, and murdered there; on Saturday, July 12, over 3000 Jewish men were put to death there.

A Judenrat was established on German orders (July 26, 1941), and chaired by Rabbi Rosenmann. But his deputy, Ephraim Barash, was the actual head and served as its liaison with the German authorities. On August 1, some 50,000 Jews were segregated into a closed Ghetto. Every Jew in the 15-65 age group was forced to work and the Germans meted out physical punishment, including death sentences to anyone attempting to avoid or resist forced labor. There were private factories in the Ghetto, owned by a German industrialist, Oskal Stefen. Jews were also employed in various German enterprises outside the Ghetto. Two thousand persons were employed by the Judenrat, not including those in charge of the Ghetto's economic enterprises. Over 200 men served in the "Jewish Police". The deputy chairman of the Judenrat knew the truth about the deportations and death camps and had also read German documents containing plans to liquidate the Ghetto. Nevertheless, up to his last day,

he trusted in the idea that the inmates' hard work and economic "usefulness" would delay their destruction or even save them. Most of the inhabitants of the Ghetto trusted Barash and shared his illusions. He stayed at his post until he was deported to Majdanek and murdered there.

The Germans embarked upon the liquidation of the Jews on February 5-12, 1943. When the first Aktion in the Ghetto took place. The Jews were dragged from their homes and hiding places. One thousand of them were killed on the spot. While 10,000 were deported to Treblinka death camp. At this time, the local German authorities who were interested in prolonging the existence of the Ghetto for economic reasons were negotiating with the authorities on the date of the liquidation of the Ghetto. The date determined for the final destruction of the Bialystok Ghetto was August 16, 1943.

An underground came into existence in November 1942. Mordechai Tenenbaum (Tamaroff) was sent by the Warsaw Jewish fighting organization to organize resistance in the Bialystok Ghetto. Its main problems were the lack of arms and disunity in the ranks. The Ghetto stood alone in its struggle, for no help could be expected from the Polish resistance. In the early stage, Barash supported the Ghetto underground and supplied it with finances and information, through Tenenbaum. His support, however, lasted as long as the Germans were unaware of its existence. When the first Aktion took place, in February 1943, the underground was not yet ready. However it stepped up its activities and attempts were made to establish contact with the Partisans in the forests. Three small groups left the Ghetto for the forests (January, March and June 1943).

It was not until July 1943, after the break with the Judenrat chairman, that the various underground movements in the Ghetto united, on the basis of Tenenbaum's views, in a united fighting organization. The united Jewish underground called upon the Jews to fight in the Ghetto rather than in the forests. The final liquidation of the Ghetto was to take place on August 16, 1943 and the Germans, aware of the existence of the underground, made careful secret preparations for the Aktion. The underground engaged in an open battle with the Germans, and after a day of fighting, 72 fighters retreated to a bunker in order to organize their escape to the forests. The Germans killed all the fighters, with a single exception. The Ghetto fighters held out for another month, and night after night the gunfire reverberated through Bialystok. The commanders of the uprising, Tenenbaum and Moszkowicz presumably committed suicide when the revolt was quashed. Other prominent leaders of the underground were Zerach Zylberberg, Hershel Rosenthal, Haika Grosman and Israel

Margulies. A month later, the Germans announced the completion of the Aktion in which some 40,000 Jews were deported to Treblinka and Majdanek. The members of the Judenrat were among the last group to be deported.

The Jewish Reconstruction Committee in Bialystok was created after the city was liberated from Nazi occupation. In fact, our committee was the first of any Jewish city in Poland to organize after the war. At first there were only fifty Jews in Bialystok. Then others who had hid out in the forest and the bunkers arrived, followed by Jewish repatriates from the Soviet Union.

About 712 Jews live in Bialystok today. Two hundred ninety two of them are native Bialystokers, the remainder from surrounding towns. All of the Jewish provincial communities were totally destroyed, with the exception of Bielsk, where seventy-six Jews live, and Suwalk, with thirty-six. Nearly 300,000 Jews from the towns around Bialystok were exterminated.

Most Jews live in buildings owned by our committee, others in private dwellings. Living conditions are terrible. Of the 712 Jews, forty-eight elderly people and sixty-nine sick and disabled depend on welfare. No one can predict whether a Jewish community can be rebuilt in Bialystok. Only time will tell. In the meantime, we are doing everything to reconstruct our community with modest means after such terrible devastation.

After World War I, the economic conditions of the aftermath of the war brought about issuances of notgeld as a substitute for money. The illustrated note was issued in Bialystok in 1915. Its value was 100 German marks or 60 Russian rubles.



Hirsch Berend Oppenheimer

The *Oppenheimer Stiftung* (Oppenheimer Housing Trust) was founded by Hirsch Berend Oppenheimer in 1868 at Nos. 16, 17, 17a and 18 Kraienkamp in the city of Hamburg, Germany. The trust was established to provide *Freiwohnungen* (subsidized flats) for needy members of the *Deutsch-Israelitische Gemeinde* (German Israelite Community).

Individuals who received regular support from the community, or the city of Hamburg, or who were publicly known as beggars, were not accepted by the trust. Only orthodox Jews who observed Judaic law, and who had lead an "irreproachable" life, were considered by the trust. Individuals reduced to poverty through not fault of their own were given precedence. Priority was given to males and their families, however, a widow of a *Freiwohner* (subsidized tenant) received a small flat for as long as she lived. A synagogue was established "for eternity" as part of the trust and run according to strict orthodox Jewish ritual. The trust's tenants were obliged to attend all religious services.

Hirsch Berend Oppenheimer, the founder of the trust, was only able to be involved with the evolution of his trust for a period of two years, as he died on December 16th 1870. He was born in Hamburg on April 28th, 1794 as the eldest of five children. He was a businessman, and last lived in the Neustadt district of Hamburg. He was buried in the former Grindel cemetery, and in 1937 was transferred to a grave of honor in the Ohlsdorf cemetery.

In his will, he also designated funds for the maintenance of a private synagogue that existed at Nos. 63-67 Neuer Wall. It was likewise natural to him that the trust building in Kielortallee include a synagogue. When the original building in the former Kraienkamp was demolished as part of city redevelopment measures, a five-story building was erected in 1907-08, by the architect Ernst Friedheim, which contained a total of 23 two and three roomed flats, including that of the caretaker. The synagogue was housed at the rear and extended the length of the central part of the building, and to the height of the first floor. It was identifiable from the rear courtyard by a curved recess, with a small apse, and colored, leaded windows. Above the apse there was a small, circular window with a Magen David. The synagogue had a flat roof and a small women's gallery facing the Torah shrine.

Apart from the trust's tenants, the synagogue was also attended by

inhabitants of the neighborhood. The semi-detached building exists today in a good structural condition. It remained in the ownership of the *Jüdische Gemeinde in Hamburg* (Jewish Community in Hamburg) until 1960. It is now a private residential building.

The former synagogue is recognizable today from its external structure. It, and the rest of the trust buildings, survived the Second World War intact. The synagogue was reopened in 1945 for the approximate 80 member congregation, following a makeshift refurbishing.

From the former circa of 20 synagogues in Hamburg this was the only one after the war whose state of repair permitted the regular holding of services. It functioned as the sole synagogue in Hamburg until the new synagogue in *Hohen Weide* was opened in 1960.

A medal honoring Hirsch Berend Oppenheimer was struck on his death. The obverse has a portrait of Oppenheimer within a circle surrounded by his name. The reverse shows a view of the trust buildings with inscriptions and the date 1868.

The SHEKEL is indebted to Bill Rosenblum for this article. The medal and source of information was listed in his mail bid sale number 34C.



PROFILE OF A SABRA

Sagi Yaacov Solomon was born in Haifa, Israel in 1974. Both of his parents were also born in Israel, to Holocaust surviving parents. The Solomon family is great in numbers, both in Israel and in Southern California. Aside from his parents and brothers, his entire family lives throughout Israel, from the north to the south. The family background is steeped in the history of Palestine and Israel, defending Palestine right up to the time of statehood in 1948 and then the State of Israel. When Sagi was four years old, his immediate family moved from Israel to Los Angeles, California where they have lived ever since. Holding dual citizenship, Sagi was able to return home to Israel for many years each summer during vacation from school. Although it has been fourteen years since he has been back to Israel, Sagi plans on returning in December to take his fiancé to meet his family. Sagi graduated from Bravo Medical High School in 1992 where he majored in biology. Following graduation and seeking employment that offered him more excitement in his life than biology would have offered, Sagi went into the same business as his father, doing commercial electrical work. Upon his father's early retirement, Sagi took over the family business and has since started his own electrical company, building restaurants for some of the biggest restaurant chains and also several nightclubs in the Los Angeles area.

Sagi joined his first ever coin club in 1991, the Los Angeles Coin Club, where he held the different positions of secretary, editor and president. It wasn't long before he realized and found a club that held all of his collecting interests, the Israel Numismatic Society of Los Angeles (it later merged with the Israel Coin Club of Los Angeles and became known as the INS/ICC of Los Angeles). In this club, Sagi has worn many different hats, as secretary, treasurer, as editor and to this very day, he is still the president. INS/ICC of Los Angeles is the last remaining active Israel coin club under AINA. Sagi is also a member of the ANA, the Society of Israeli Philatelists, the German Philatelic Society and is a Life Member and a current Board Member of AINA. Throughout the years, Sagi has attended many coin shows and stamp shows, due to being active in these various organizations.

Sagi became a collector of coins at the young age of 9 when his grandfather gave him his first coins of Palestine, Egypt, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon and Israel. Since that time, he has completed several collections: Israel, Palestine dating back to the Ottoman Empire, and Stamps of Israel and Palestine. However, his collecting interests do not stop with coins and

stamps. He has one of the most complete and comprehensive collections of military badges, ribbons and medals that I have ever seen. These include Israel, Palestine, and the historical world of Jewish Units. The variety of his collections continued even further into other areas. Being that his grandmother is an Auschwitz survivor, he began to build a massive Holocaust collection in 1998. This collection includes many different items such as uniforms, patches, badges, original photographs and documents, along with coins and stamps. Collecting these items then led him into the field of collecting Nazi memorabilia. His WWII German Stamp collection is one of the most complete in the Western United States. This collection includes Nazi stamps, labels, dues and revenues that have never been cataloged before. Needless to say, Sagi is a true collector at heart. I can truthfully say that every time I had the opportunity to listen to Sagi as he would give a presentation and exhibit a few of the items from one of his different collections, that I would just sit there wide-eyed and in wonder.

Written by Donna J. Sims, NLG



JACQUES WIENER AND THE COLOGNE SYNAGOGUE MEDAL

The Wieners were a Jewish-Flemish family of extraordinary artists and die engravers. Jacob Wiener (1815-1899), who often signed his medals as Jacques Wiener, was the eldest of three brothers [the others were Leopold (1823-1891) and Charles (1832-1888)], all of whom excelled in the art of medal engraving. Jacques was born of Hungarian parents, studied in Paris and then settled in Brussels.

In 1845 he decided to engrave medals representing the exterior and interior of monuments with a degree of precision of details that had not yet been attempted. The first in the series was a group of ten medals, 50 mm in diameter, depicting famous Belgian churches. All but one of these medals were done in collaboration with his brother Leopold. Jacques Wiener then undertook what was to be a series of 50 medals, each 59 mm in diameter, entitled "Medals of the most remarkable Edifices of Europe", to represent the principal monuments of Europe. Of these the majority were cathedrals, churches and mosques. Three depicted synagogues.

He was unable to complete the whole task as only 41 medals were issued, some of which were done in conjunction with his brother Charles. He also engraved dies for a large number of other monuments, including prisons, town halls, the stock exchange etc. In addition to buildings, he engraved dies for individuals commemorating important events in their lives. His work was not only prodigious but was also the best rendition of perspective of the interior of buildings. This intricate and minute work, however, was to take its toll, for by 1872 Wiener had almost completely lost his eyesight, and after 1874 he produced no more medals. His collective works have been catalogued by Emiel van Hoydonck who lists, mostly with photographs, 233 medals and 62 jetons by Jacques Wiener. The vast majority of his medals were struck in bronze, with a relatively few in silver.

SYNAGOGUE AT COLOGNE

Obverse has a view of the exterior **SYNAGOGE ZU COELN
EINGEWEIFT AM 29 AUGUST 1861**

Exergue: **E.F. ZWIRNER ARCHIT.**

Rev: View of interior Hebrew inscriptions, translated on the right as, "Abraham Oppenheim Built a House of God for the People of Cologne"; and on the left as, "It was Rededicated on the 23rd of Elul. Remember that God is good." *Signed:* **J. WIENER F.**



This medal commemorates the building of the conservative synagogue in der Glockengasse (the Bell Lane) in Cologne. Funding for the new synagogue was provided by Abraham Oppenheim (whose name is mentioned in the Hebrew inscription), a son of the banker Salomon Oppenheim. The inauguration of this magnificent, synagogue took place in 1861. It had seats for 226 men and 140 women.

The synagogue in Cologne, along with many other Jewish institutions, was sacked and burned by the Nazis in 1938, during what is commonly known as "Kristallnacht" (Night of the Broken Glass). Cologne's Modern Opera now sits on the site of the 19th century Glockengasse Synagogue. The synagogue was never rebuilt.

As the last month of the Jewish year, Elul, mentioned in the Hebrew inscription, is traditionally a time of introspection and stocktaking -- a time to review one's deeds and spiritual progress over the past year and to prepare for the upcoming Jewish High Holy Days of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

The **E. F. ZWIRNER** whose name is inscribed in the exergue of the obverse of the medal is Ernst Friedrich Zwirner (1802-1861). He was the architect responsible for the construction of the synagogue. Zwirner, a master builder of cathedrals, also built the Cathedral at Cologne and the Apollinariskirche at Remagen. His works won him great honor and distinction. It is said that his devotion to the work of restoring the Cologne cathedral was so great that many of his contemporaries felt his zeal had hastened his death.

ISRAEL PHILHARMONIC ORCHESTRA

Central European musical traditions made their way to the Middle East from the time of the first mass migration of Jews to Turkish-controlled Palestine in the 1880s. Following Turkey's defeat in World War I, the Balfour Declaration designated part of Palestine as a national home for the Jewish people, which resulted in an increase of Jewish settlement in the area. Institutions of musical education were established as the Jewish population grew.

As scores of Jews fled Nazi persecution in the 1930s, the population grew ever greater. One of those fleeing persecution was the renown violinist Bronislav Huberman who foresaw the Holocaust. He arrived in Palestine in 1933 and immediately urged the leading Jewish orchestral players in Germany, many of whom had lost their jobs, to leave their country. Huberman had always been impressed by the enthusiasm for music in Palestine, and noted that out of a Jewish population of 280,000 in Jerusalem, Haifa and Tel-Aviv, 8000 regularly attended concerts. If in New York a similar proportion of the population went to concerts, every symphony concert would be attended by 300,000 persons.

Since it was these people of Palestine that had inspired the creation of the orchestra, Huberman was determined they should benefit by it, and boasted that for the first time in musical history, the principle will be adopted that only the best is good enough for working-class audiences. With the help of the Workers' Branch of the Palestine Orchestra Association, two subscription concerts were planned in each city; the second identical in artists and program, but designed for workmen with tickets at a quarter to a fifth of the price of the series for ordinary concert-goers. Conductor William Steinberg helped organize and prepare the orchestra.

Finally on 26 December 1936 Huberman's vision became a reality when Arturo Toscanini conducted the first performance of the Palestine Orchestra as it was then called in Tel-Aviv, playing Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn and Brahms. Toscanini described it as the happiest moment of his life, and one of the highest points of his career. After conducting four concerts in Palestine and four in Cairo and Alexandria in Egypt, he refused any payment, or even reimbursement of his traveling expenses. He was so impressed with the orchestra and "unique audiences" that he decided to return the next year.

When the Israel's independence was proclaimed in 1948, the group was renamed the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

The Philharmonic had no permanent conductor for nearly the first forty years of its existence and was instead led by a succession of prominent guest conductors. This exposure to a remarkable array of leading maestros lent the orchestra a certain flexibility and versatility, but at the cost of attaining cohesion and a consistent sound. However, two names dominate its history: Leonard Bernstein (1918-90) and Zubin Mehta.

Leonard Bernstein began conducting the orchestra nearly from the time he rocketed to fame during the 1940s, and led the historic concert at Beer-Sheva in 1947 just after the Israel Defense Forces took the site. He also conducted an important concert at the Lebanese border and, following the 1967 war, led the legendary Mount Scopus performance of Mahler's Symphony No. 2 in celebration of the capturing of Jerusalem. His forty-year association with the Philharmonic was deep, committed, and intense, even though he never held an official position with the orchestra.

Zubin Mehta was appointed music advisor to the orchestra in 1968 and, in 1977, became its music director. In 1981 he was named music director for life. He demonstrated continued commitment to the orchestra even as he received more prominent appointments, including the music directorships of the Los Angeles and New York Philharmonics.

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra performs more than 200 concerts annually, playing in subscription concerts in all the major cities throughout Israel. It also takes part in special opera productions, some of them in the ancient Amphitheatre at Caesarea. As well as being "Israel's best ambassador abroad" with its annual foreign tours, the IPO contributes to the national effort with special concerts for IDF soldiers, at times of war even in the most remote outposts. Thus, the IPO played at the celebration of the Declaration of Israel's Independence (1948), in newly liberated Beer-Sheva (1948), on Mount Scopus in Jerusalem after it had been reunified and in Ophira (1967), in Bethlehem's Nativity Square (Christmas 1968), at the "Good Fence" on the Lebanese border (1977) and at Massada (1988).

The Israel Philharmonic Orchestra has done much to further the careers of Israeli artists and young talent from Israel and abroad. Earlier the ranks of the IPO included many musicians who came mainly from USSR and the USA, but nowadays more than half the IPO members have been born and trained for the most part in Israel. The IPO has played host to many of the world's greatest conductors. In 1992, the IPO appointed Kurt Masur Honorary Guest Conductor.

The IPO has incorporated in its mission the nurturing and development of young and gifted musicians and provides opportunities for

them. This is demonstrated through scholarship funds, support of the Young Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, an annual "Young Artists Concert", and the annual "The Maestro and His Young Guests" youth concert. In 1993 the IPO launched its "IPO Young Subscribers' Club" for junior-high boys and girls. Members of this club receive, for a very symbolic annual fee, entrance to concerts, on a seat-availability basis, besides which they enjoy various educational activities. For younger children, the IPO offers a series of five narrated concerts which attracts thousands of its future subscribers.

The orchestra is a true "philharmonic" in the traditional sense, meaning that it is a cooperative owned by its musicians. Its main venue is the Mann Auditorium in Tel-Aviv, a hall with whose acoustics have often proven especially problematic for recording companies.

A medal was struck in 1986 commemorating the jubilee year of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. The obverse is entirely in Hebrew except the word *Jubilee of the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra 1936-1986*. A unique stylish menorah is pictured in the center that incorporates a tuning fork and the base clef symbol. The reverse has the inscription *With Harps and Lyre Drums and Dance, Triumphant Cymbals*. The design in the center is of a three string lyre.



A CHECK SIGNED BY HAIM AMZALAK

The origins of the Amzalak family can be found in either Spain or Portugal whose Jewish communities were expelled in 1492 and 1497 respectively. Although there are few pre-eighteenth century historical sources in which the family is mentioned, it would appear that at least some of its members settled in Morocco during the sixteenth century and remained there until the middle of the eighteenth century when they moved to the prospering British colony of Gibraltar.

In Gibraltar, the family soon rose to wealth through the financial ingenuity of Moses and Joseph Amzalak, two brothers from whom the two branches of the family descend as both became successful merchants. Moses, the elder brother, left Gibraltar and settled in Lisbon, while Joseph remained in the colony until 1816 when he went to Palestine. Joseph died in 1845 and his descendants would play an important role in the economical development of Palestine, as well as in the affairs of the Sephardi community there.

Haim Amzalak, Joseph's son was married twice; the first time was to Esther Levi of Hebron. They settled in Jaffa where they had six children. In his later years, Haim had four more daughters by his second wife. After his brother Solomon's death (1876) Haim also adopted Solomon's son. Haim Amzalak and his family resided in a large three-storey house near the port of Jaffa. However, they eventually had to move from there, due to the noise in the area, and to settle in one of the houses on Ben-Zion's estate in Manshiya. The atmosphere in Haim Amzalak's house was described by Sir Moses Montefiore, an old friend of the family:

It must have been about seven o'clock in the evening when we arrived. The lady of the house, surrounded by the most amiable young family and some friends of the house, gave us a friendly welcome. A refreshing beverage, consisting of almond and rose water, was handed round and ten minutes afterwards a dinner was served in the best European style. An almost endless variety of dishes, partly Syrian, partly French, were handed round by waiters dressed in the French style, who spoke French, Italian, Spanish, German and Arabic. All this might have made us forget that we were in the Holy Land had we not been reminded of it every now and then, either by the overpowering heat or the bite of an intruding mosquito."

Like his father, Haim Amzalak was involved in the banking business, where he operated in collaboration with Ya'akov Valero (see The Shekel Nov.-Dec. 2006) a member of another prominent Sephardi family. But it was in the land business that he invested his main fortune and efforts. He owned some land in Jerusalem, which was managed for him by his representatives there. Some of it he later sold, and some was retained and provided him with rental income. Amzalak was one of the first Jews to buy land in the vicinity of Jaffa, both in anticipation of its development for residential use, and for the planting of orange groves. His wife, Esther, probably on his advise, also bought some land in the area, which was planted with fruit trees, mainly oranges. It was this compound that also served the family as their summer residence. Amzalak also represented other investors in real estate, using his extensive knowledge and expertise in this field.

In 1875 Haim Amzalak was appointed the representative of British Lloyd's in Jaffa. The agency prospered during those years, owing to the growth of Jaffa as a center of trade and industry.

In 1899, Lloyd's acknowledged Amzalak's performance on their behalf:

"I am instructed to take this opportunity of expressing to you the best thanks of the Committee of Lloyd's for the many valuable services rendered by you to this Corporation during the time that you have held Lloyd's Agency at Jaffa, and to express the hope that you may continue to occupy that position."

In 1911, Haim retired from his position as Lloyd's agent and recommended that Lloyd's continue their agency under his eldest son's supervision. Lloyd's agreed and the agency remained in the hands of the Amzalak family.

Haim Amzalak received consular appointments from two nations, the first from Portugal in 1871, and the second from Great Britain in 1872. While Amzalak's services to the Portuguese government appear to have been rather limited, his activities on behalf of the Britain were of a much greater consequence. The appointment was approved on December 16, 1872, on the recommendation of the British Consul in Jerusalem, Noel Temple Moore.

The Jewish community celebrated the appointment and the *Habazeleth* newspaper wrote:

"Today was a happy day for Israel, today a royal decree was read appointing Haim Amzalak the position of Vice Consul of Great Britain"

Montefiore, on his visit to Jaffa in 1875, also expressed his sentiments about Haim Amzalak's role as vice consul:

"At four o'clock p.m. Her Majesty's Vice Consul at Jaffa (Signor Amzalak) accompanied by his son, two kawasses, with their official batons and several attendants, approached our ship. It was a source of high gratification to me to see one of my bretheren, a native of the Holy Land, filling so high and honourable an office. I knew his father well. He was one of the most worthy and charitable of our bretheren in Jerusalem, and I was now much pleased to have the opportunity of evincing my regard for his son, whose abilities and high character had been so honorably acknowledged by the consular functions entrusted him."

Your editor has collected the semi-unique fiscal paper of Eretz Yisrael for over forty years. The Anglo-Palestine Company Ltd. Jaffa branch check that illustrates this article is from this collection. It was issued by Haim Amzalak on the 21st of October, 1908 and serves as the numismatic illustration for this article about one of Palestine's most illustrious citizens.



Motifs in Motion in Medals

by Shmuel Aviezer

The many medals issued along the years by the Israel Government Coins and Medals Corporation made it possible to detect some active and dynamic motifs thereof as against the usually preferred passive ones.

Some examples:

1) Valour -1958

The roaring of the lion of Tel Hai, sculpted in homage to the heroic stand of Josef Trumpeldor, can seemingly be heard loud and clear.

2) The Ghetto Uprising -1963

Out of the eternal light in Yad Vashem, Jerusalem sprout tongues of flames that flare up diffusedly.

3) Immigrant Blockade Runners -1964

An enlarged barbed-wire fence, set above the relief outline of Palestine is broken by a blockade runner which heads straight on to the beach. This motif reflects the strong feelings against the closure of access to the Holyland for immigrants from Europe.

4) Hebrew University of Jerusalem -1975

A long line of stylized student-figures, entering the buildings in Mount Scopus of the Hebrew University symbolizes the insatiable yearning to learn knowledge and wisdom.

5) Hapoel Ingathering -1979 (medal for official presentation)

Figures of sportsmen are fervently engaged in different sport activities.

6) Offeg. 1 -1989

The Israel satellite bursts from Israel and circles the earth from east to west in a mighty swoop.

7) 1st Tokyo International Coin Convention -1990

A figure of a horse in a jump-off dashing stance.

8) Everlasting Covenant -1991

A spiral with a rainbow in a choice of colors signalizes the covenant between the King of Universe and his people that was sealed after the great Deluge.

9) Youth -1993

The young couple dances in a most gracious and conspicuous movement.

10) The ship Egoz -1993

The Egoz was caught by a storm close to the Moroccan coast in 1961 and all the forty-four immigrants-to-be aboard were drowned. The obverse of the medal shows how this small ship heroically struggled against the upsurging wave.



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The Girl's School in Jaffa Illustrations



THE GIRL'S SCHOOL IN JAFFA

The disciples of Ahad Haam had a specific agenda. They wanted Hebrew to be the national language spoken in Palestine. They proposed establishing a "national college" in Jaffa to meet the needs of European immigrants who preferred urban life to farming but did not want their children to be educated in the ultra-orthodox Talmud Torah (*heder*) schools, which had a virtual monopoly in the towns. Neither did these immigrants wish their children to be educated in the Christian mission schools. Rather, they aimed for a Hebrew and general education, similar to that provided for the children of the agricultural settlements, where general subjects were already being taught in Hebrew.

The founders of the Jaffa school had to look abroad for funding since this was impossible to find in Eretz-Israel. The only available source was that of the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris, the one Jewish international organization that had established schools, especially for students in Arab countries. The Alliance decided to include Palestine in its worldwide network of French-language schools, the main aim of which was to produce competent administrators and civil servants.

Graduates of the Mikve Yisrael agricultural school, founded by the Alliance in 1870, often served in neighboring countries: one became manager of the royal gardens in Egypt and another took up a position managing an agricultural school in Tunis. So although the aims and outlook of the assimilationist Alliance were actually quite different from those of the nationalistic Jewish settlers in Eretz-Israel, a branch of the Alliance was opened in Jaffa and an application made to open a school there.

The Alliance's school for boys, *Kol Israel Haverim*, was opened in 1892. The Jaffa branch of the Alliance applied to Hovevei Zion in Odessa, which allocated a yearly budget for the school. The Jaffa group hoped to be able to withstand ideological pressure from the Alliance in Paris, in view of the financial contribution from Odessa and the assumption that they could control the schools curriculum. Due to their not being subject to Ottoman authority, the group was known as the *Avtonomia Russit* (Russian autonomous entity).

The school for boys was followed shortly by a school for girls, headed by Rosa Yaffe. Most of the 78 pioneer pupils were Sephardic girls who had been enrolled at the Scottish Mission in Jaffa. By 1897, there were 250 students. The governing committee was pleased with the rapid growth of the school but the Hebrew teachers at both institutions

wanted nothing less than to create a "national Hebrew school in curriculum and spirit." One by one, they substituted Hebrew for French instruction in general subjects.

This enraged the directorate in Paris, which demanded that things return to the status quo ante. Rosa Yaffe staunchly defended the Hebrew teachers standpoint. The dispute pitted Jaffa and Odessa against Paris. Eastern European Hebrew newspapers debated the issue, Bnei Moshe members discussed it, and the controversy swelled until, one decade after the founding of the schools, it was accepted that no compromise could be reached.

In 1902 the property was divided: the boys school, together with two-thirds of the land, remained with the Alliance, while the girls school was transferred in 1903, together with its principal, to the sole authority of the Odessa Hovevei Zion. French was confined to being taught as a foreign language. In 1920, following the establishment of the British Mandate in Palestine, it was supplanted by English.

In early 1904, the Odessa committee had managed to bolster the girls school with new forces: Mordechai Krishevsky (Ezrahi), a brilliant Hebrew teacher, was brought in from Jerusalem, while from Russia came Yehiel Yehieli an outstanding teacher and director, whose name soon became synonymous with the successful and prestigious Hebrew school for girls. Its renown even reached Irkutsk, Siberia, where a Jewish philanthropist was inspired to finance through the Odessa committee the construction of an impressive new building for the school along the seam dividing Neve Tzedek and Neve Shalom.

This building, with its large assembly hall, became the pride of the community. In later years the revisionist leader, Zeev Jabotinsky, would stand on its balcony to address new recruits to the Jewish Legion, which served in the British army in the First World War. Prior to the establishment of the state, the Haganah had its headquarters there. The charismatic dancer and choreographer Baruch Agadati organized his legendary Purim balls during the thirties in this building which received a new lease of life when, in 1989, it became the Suzanne Dellal Dance Centre.

An Anglo-Palestine Company Ltd check issued 21 Oct. 1908 on the Girl School Jaffa account is from your editor's collection. The check is signed by two illustrious gentlemen well renown in Eretz-Yisrael history which shows the importance connected to the Girl's School. It is signed by Dr. Chas. Chissin and M. Dizengoff, two gentlemen you will hear more about in the next issue. It is payable to T.E. Chelouche for 2000 Fr. The Chelouche family were early builders in Jaffa and Tel-Aviv.

Why are Jews so Powerful

By Dr. Farrukh Salee

The writer is an Islamabad-based freelance columnist

There are only 14 million Jews in the world; seven million in the Americas, five million in Asia, two million in Europe and 100,000 in Africa. For every single Jew in the world there are 100 Muslims. Yet, Jews are more than a hundred times more powerful than all the Muslims put together. Ever wondered why?

Jesus of Nazareth was Jewish. Albert Einstein, the most influential scientist of all time and TIME magazine's 'Person of the Century', was a Jew. Sigmund Freud -- the father of psychoanalysis was a Jew. So were Karl Marx, Paul Samuelson and Milton Friedman.

Here are a few other Jews whose intellectual output has enriched the whole humanity: Benjamin Rubin gave humanity the vaccinating needle. Jonas Salk developed the first polio vaccine. Albert Sabin developed the improved live polio vaccine. Gertrude Elion gave us a leukaemia fighting drug. Baruch Blumberg developed the vaccination for Hepatitis B. Paul Ehrlich discovered a treatment for syphilis (a sexually transmitted disease). Elie Metchnikoff won a Nobel Prize in infectious diseases.

Bernard Katz won a Nobel Prize in neuromuscular transmission. Andrew Schally won a Nobel in endocrinology (disorders of the endocrine system; diabetes, hyperthyroidism). Aaron Beck founded Cognitive Therapy (psychotherapy to treat mental disorders, depression and phobias). Gregory Pincus developed the first oral contraceptive pill. George Wald won a Nobel for furthering our understanding of the human eye. Stanley Cohen won a Nobel in embryology (study of embryos and their development). Willem Kolff came up with the kidney dialysis machine.

Over the past 105 years, 14 million Jews have won 15-dozen Nobel Prizes while only three Nobel Prizes have been won by 1.4 billion Muslims (other than Peace Prizes).

Why are Jews so powerful? Stanley Mezor invented the first micro-processing chip. Leo Szilard developed the first nuclear chain reactor. Peter Schultz, optical fibre cable; Charles Adler, traffic lights; Benno Strauss, Stainless steel; Isador Kisee, sound movies; Emile Berliner, telephone microphone and Charles Ginsburg, videotape recorder.

Famous financiers in the business world who belong to Jewish faith include Ralph Lauren (Polo), Levis Strauss (Levi's Jeans), Howard Schultz (Starbuck's), Sergey Brin (Google), Michael Dell (Dell Computers), Larry Ellison (Oracle), Donna Karan (DKNY), Irv Robbins (Baskins & Robbins) and Bill Rosenberg (Dunkin Donuts). Richard Levin, President of Yale University, is a Jew. So are Henry Kissinger (American secretary of state), Alan Greenspan (fed chairman under Reagan, Bush, Clinton and Bush), Joseph Lieberman, Madeleine Albright (American secretary of state), Casper Weinberger (American secretary of defence), Maxim Litvinov (USSR foreign Minister), David Marshal (Singapore's first chief minister), Issac Isaacs (governor-general of Australia), Benjamin Disraeli (British statesman and author), Yevgeny Primakov (Russian PM), Barry Goldwater, Jorge Sampaio (president of Portugal), John Deutsch (CIA director), Herb Gray (Canadian deputy PM), Pierre Mendes (French PM), Michael Howard (British home secretary), Bruno Kreisky (chancellor of Austria) and Robert Rubin (American secretary of treasury).

In the media, famous Jews include Wolf Blitzer (CNN), Barbara Walters (ABC News), Eugene Meyer (Washington Post), Henry Grunwald (editor-in-chief Time), Katherine Graham (publisher of The Washington Post), Joseph Lelyyeld (Executive editor, The New York Times), and Max Frankel (New York Times).

Can you name the most beneficent philanthropist in the history of the world? The name is George Soros, a Jew, who has so far donated a colossal \$4 billion most of which has gone as aid to scientists and universities around the world. Second to George Soros is Walter Annenberg, another Jew, who has built a hundred libraries by donating an estimated \$2 billion.

At the Olympics, Mark Spitz set a record of sorts by winning seven gold medals. Lenny Krayzelburg is a three-time Olympic gold medalist. Spitz, Krayzelburg and Boris Becker are all Jewish.

Did you know that Harrison Ford, George Burns, Tony Curtis, Charles Bronson, Sandra Bullock, Billy Crystal, Woody Allen, Paul Newman, Peter Sellers, Dustin Hoffman, Michael Douglas, Ben Kingsley, Kirk Douglas, Goldie Hawn, Cary Grant, William Shatner, Jerry Lewis and Peter Falk are all Jewish? As a matter of fact, Hollywood itself was founded by a Jew.

Among directors and producers, Steven Spielberg, Mel Brooks, Oliver Stone, Aaron Spelling (Beverly Hills 90210), Neil Simon (The Odd Couple), Andrew Vaina (Rambo 1/2/3), Michael Man (Starsky

and Hutch), Milos Forman (One flew over the Cuckoo's Nest), Douglas Fairbanks (The thief of Baghdad) and Ivan Reitman (Ghostbusters) are all Jewish.

To be certain, Washington is the capital that matters and in Washington the lobby that matters is The American Israel Public Affairs Committee, or AIPAC. Washington knows that if PM Ehud Olmert were to discover that the earth is flat, AIPAC will make the 109th Congress pass a resolution congratulating Olmert on his discovery.

William James Sidis, with an IQ of 250-300, is the brightest human who ever existed. Guess what faith did he belong to?

So, why are Jews so powerful?

The answer is: Education.

Higher Education in Israel is diverse, creative and individualistic. Strong foundations were laid even before the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1948, and Israel has succeeded in reaching high international standards in many disciplines. Three Israeli scientists have been awarded Nobel Prizes.

The Israel 58th Anniversary Coin puts the spotlight on Israel's Higher Education System that prepares the country for a prosperous future. The coin design consists of several symbols of the different disciplines in which Israel excels – Science, Humanities, Technology, Mathematics and others – outlined by the shape of a student's cap. Each of the four angles of the cap reach out to the future, symbolizing the aims of Higher Education to advance the State of Israel and humanity all over the world.



COIMBRA

A HISTORICAL CITY IN PORTUGAL

Coimbra contained one of the most important European Jewish quarters to be found in the cities in the middle ages. It is known today for the University, founded in 1290, one of the oldest in Europe, and due to its monumental buildings that attracts tourists from around the world. At one time, the city had three Jewish quarters, in the parishes of *Santiago*, *Santa Justa* and *Pedreira*. With the epidemic caused by the black plague in the 14th century, the population decreased significantly, becoming concentrated only in the Jewish quarter of *Santa Justa*, which, after the order was given for the expulsion of the Jews in 1496, came to be known as *Rua Nova*.

The most important synagogue was situated in the *Judiaria Velha de Santiago*, the Jewish quarter close to the Igreja do Corpo de Deus. The cultural heritage of the Jews was carried on into many families of converted or so-called -"New Christians," contributing to the scientific and humanistic advancement of the University, symbolically situated on the hill overlooking the city.

There is an interesting story connected with Coimbra. Elizabeth, or Isabel, daughter of King Peter III of Aragon, was named after her great-aunt, Elizabeth of Hungary, but she is known in Portugal by the Spanish form of that name, Isabela. She was the wife of King Dinis of Portugal. She was canonized in 1625, although some records list 1626.

She is reputed to have founded charities and hospitals. In Portugal she is remembered for the miracle of the roses in which she was taking bread (or coins) to the poor only to be asked by her less than generous husband what she was carrying. The bread (or coins) was miraculously transformed into roses, thereby appeasing her spouse.

In all the region of Coimbra, Santa Isabel, or, as the people call her, the Holy Queen, is the object of the most successful Marrano Jewish or crypto-Jewish cult in Portugal. She is mainly venerated in the church of Santa Clara in Coimbra, where her silver mausoleum is constantly visited. Near the altar there is a "petition box" for the people to ask the saint for favors in writing.

The historiography of Isabel of Aragon is an example of how certain scholars are first inspired by myths and popular sayings, then give them a serious air, and finally write "history." Actually, everything that the chroniclers wrote about the Christian merits of Isabel of Aragon is a

mythological imbroglio woven in the Renaissance, created by the nucleus of secret Jews in Coimbra to pay homage to the cult of the Holy Queen Esther. The promoters of the cult and of the canonization of the Portuguese queen, in the seventeenth century, witnesses of her Christian merits and of her miracles, were the New Christians of Coimbra (later accused of Judaism), who had regrouped in secret societies with Christian names, like the Brotherhood of Frei Diogo (from the name of Frei Diogo of Assuncion, a Franciscan who died in 1603), from which arose another society called the Brotherhood of Santo Antonio, in memory of Antonio Homen, after his death.

The association with Queen Esther is very clear. The Holy Queen is the reincarnation of the figure of Queen Esther, as conceived by the Marrano community of Coimbra during the Renaissance. The main reason for this association would have been the policy of King Dinis and his son Afonso IV in favor of the Jews, who were protected and called "my Jews". The Jews would have attributed this policy to the influence of Queen Isabel. There was a parallel with Queen Esther, a young exiled Jewess who, after entering the harem of the king of Persia, and becoming queen, set up an operation of charm and a palace coup, radically changing the fortune of the Jewish people, who went from the threat of total extermination to a position of absolute predominance, and even of tyranny over their former persecutors.

A large 90mm bronze medal, 3 ½ inches in diameter and weighing 267 gr. was issued for Coimbra. The obverse features the incredibly beautiful landscape of the town, featuring the University buildings and tower. The reverse features the shield of Coimbra



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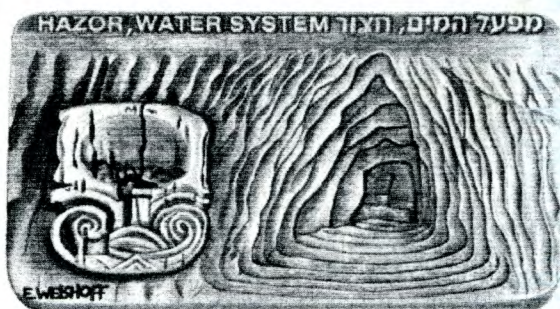
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